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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
2 November 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
FURTHER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
CONTAINED HEREIN IS NOT AUTHORIZED

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HIGHLIGHTS

The number of personnel attached to the Soviet aid mission in the DRV has been expanding in recent months, suggesting that military and economic aid is being stepped up. There was a B-52 Stratofortress strike against a suspect Viet Cong camp 30 miles northwest of Saigon last night, but no significant military ground operations have been reported during the past 24 hours.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
No significant ARVN/US or Viet Cong military operations have been reported during the past 24 hours; however, elements of the 101st Airborne Division successfully repulsed several small-scale guerrilla ground probes last night against their defensive positions near Qui Nhon (Para. 1). Twelve USAF B-52 Stratofortress strategic bombers last night attacked a suspected Viet Cong base camp in Tay Ninh Province, 30 miles northwest of Saigon; no ground follow-up operations were planned in connection with this 59th B-52 strike of the war to date (Para. 2).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
Press reports from Saigon carry an announcement of Premier Ky's plans to depart next Monday with an official party on a visit to South Korea (Para. 1).

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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

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The number of personnel attached to the Soviet military and

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economic aid mission in the DRV has been expanding in recent months and reached 260 by September. This is still lower than in 1963 when more than 330 aid officials--then involved chiefly in economic programs--were noted in North Vietnam. (Paras. 2 and 3).

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V. Communist Political Developments: Nothing significant to report.

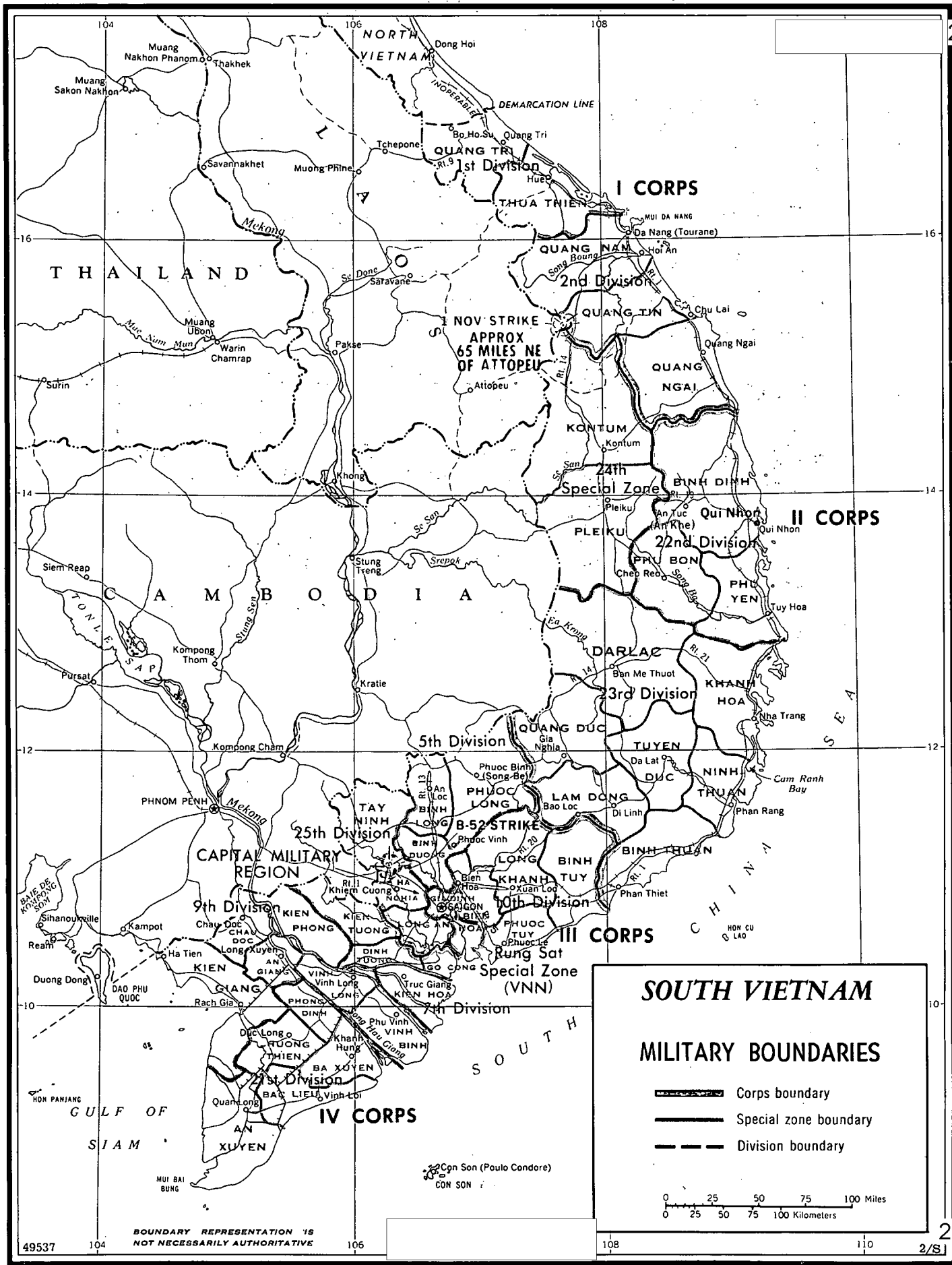
VI. Other Developments: US jet aircraft on 1 November launched a major strike against a Communist encampment and storage area in Laos near the South Vietnam border (Para. 1).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Viet Cong military activity during the past 24 hours has been characterized primarily by small-scale ground probes against defensive positions of the US 101st Airborne Division near Qui Nhon and by widespread mortar and small arms harassing fire actions against lightly defended, isolated government centers of influence throughout the four corps tactical zones of South Vietnam.

2. Twelve Guam-based USAF B-52 Stratofortresses last night attacked a suspected Viet Cong base camp in Tay Ninh Province, 30 miles northwest of Saigon. The target complex was believed to contain two unidentified Viet Cong battalions, a communications station, a training area, and munitions, medical, and supply storage areas. No ground follow-up operations were scheduled. Yesterday's air strike brought to 59 the total number of B-52 bombing missions flown to date against Communist positions in South Vietnam; the 59 missions have included a total of 983 attack sorties.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

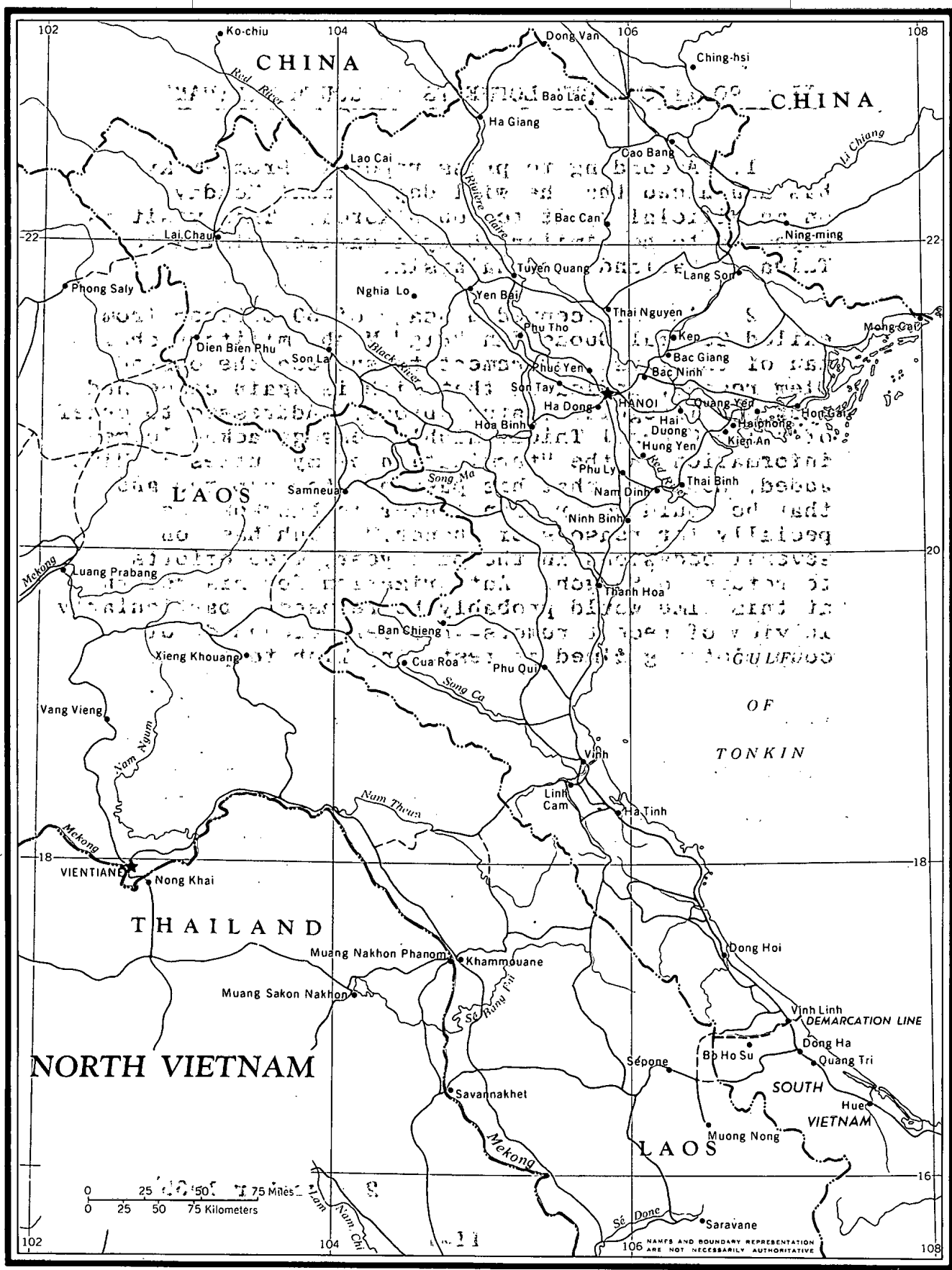
1. According to press reports, Premier Ky has announced that he will depart next Monday on an official visit to South Korea. This visit is expected to be similar to Ky's earlier visits to Taiwan, Thailand, and Malaysia.

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III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

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2. A step-up in Soviet military and economic aid in Vietnam is suggested by the continuing increase in Soviet personnel assigned to the DRV by the Soviet State Committee on Foreign Economic Relations (GKES), the organization responsible for the administration of Soviet aid programs abroad.

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3. Soviet economic aid organizations under the jurisdiction of GKES have been noted requesting more personnel for aid projects, many of which may have fallen behind completion dates set for this year. In addition, a subsection of GKES, the Engineering Directorate which handles military aid matters, is believed to have been beefed up to handle delivery of military items. However, the total number of GKES personnel in the DRV at this time is still considerably lower than in 1963 when over 330 persons--involved chiefly in economic programs--were noted in North Vietnam.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

- 1. There is nothing of significance to report.**

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VI. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

1. Thirty-seven US jet aircraft on 1 November conducted a special strike against a Communist troop encampment and storage area located about 65 miles northeast of Attapeu in southern Laos near the South Vietnamese border. Pilots reported secondary explosions from the area, which was hit with about 95 tons of bombs. This strike represented a follow-up to a SHINING BRASS reconnaissance patrol which infiltrated the area between 19 and 23 October and which pinpointed the target.

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